

Thursday, February 1, 1940.

Special Committee to Investigate
Un-American Activities.

House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

The committee met at 11:30 a.m., Hon. Joe Starnes
(Acting Chairman) presiding.

TESTIMONY OF MERWIN K. HART

(The witness was sworn by the Acting Chairman.)

Mr. Starnes. Give us your name and address, please.

Mr. Hart. Merwin K. Hart. My residence is New
Hartford, New York, and my office is 17 East 42nd Street,
New York City.

Mr. Starnes. What is your business or profession?

Mr. Hart. I am a lawyer by profession, though I
have not practiced for twenty years. For ten years
past I have been connected with the New York State Economic
Council, as president in New York City.

Mr. Starnes. You are familiar, of course, with the
statement made by Congressman Hook of Michigan, which he
inserted in the Record?

Mr. Hart. Yes, sir; I have it here.

Mr. Starnes. Which attempts to show that there was
a connection or collusion between Mr. Dies and certain
un-American and subversive activities in this country, and
if I remember correctly your name was brought into this
matter and it was alleged that you were in sympathy or
collusion with the Christian Front or Christian Mobilizers
or some of the subversive activities in this country. Will
you give a statement to the committee as to whether or not
you are a member of either of these organizations and have

worked in collusion with them in any way, shape or fashion, as alleged in these statements?

Mr. Hart. Congressmen, I am neither a member of it nor have I worked in collusion with it.

Mr. Voorhis. Of what?

Mr. Hart. The Christian Front. Nor did I ever hear of it until February, 1939. I have this statement in the Record here. Congressman, would it be agreeable to the committee if I made a statement referring to certain of the remarks here which are untrue and with respect to some of which I have the documentary proof that they are untrue?

Mr. Starnes. All right. Proceed.

Mr. Hart. Mr. Hook says on page 849, in opening his remarks, that he is going to "stick absolutely to known and verifiable facts." The testimony, so far as it relates to me, has to do with three incidents, a luncheon given by the New York State Economic Council, my organization, to Mr. Dies, on December 8, 1938, and a mass meeting by a committee of citizens at the Seventh Regiment Armory in New York on February 19, 1939, with which Mr. Dies had nothing whatsoever to do but where my name was mentioned, in fact I presided, and there are certain allegations that I will come to in a moment about that. And, lastly, a mass meeting for America, as we call it, at Madison Square Garden on November 19, 1939, at which Mr. Dies was the chief speaker.

First in regard to the luncheon, we had persuaded Mr. Dies to come to New York for this luncheon on December

3, 1938. As a matter of fact, it was rather difficult to hold him to his engagement because of fatigue and because of the fact that he claimed, and we know rightfully, that he needed to cut down on his engagements rather than increase them, and there were three second engagements that he had made in New York City within a very few days and he felt that he might drop all of them or some of them. Finally, I believe he kept them all.

But I make the point that it was with difficulty that we were able to hold Mr. Dies to this luncheon engagement. There were some eight hundred people present in the hall. We had a sponsoring committee of I guess there are fifty names here, and I will leave this with the committee in order to permit them to see it when I go. This is a program of the luncheon.

On page 550 of the Record Mr. Hook says that "it is noteworthy that Mr. Wheeler-Will's name was on the program for the luncheon as one of the sponsors." Here is a program of the luncheon and the committee will see that his name does not appear among the sponsors and it is not surprising that that is the case because we had never heard of him up to that time.

Mr. Voorhis. Was he present there?

Mr. Hart. I am coming to that in sequence, please sir. Then he says "he was on the invitation sent out." He says he has a copy of the invitation. The only name that appears on the invitation is Colonel Arthur F. Conbey, Secretary, who had the luncheon got up, and there are no other names on there.

Mr. Starnes. You are offering those as exhibits 1

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and 21

Mr. Hart. Yes.

Mr. Starnes. All right.

Mr. Hart. So that in these important details, because they would tend to bolster up the picture that Mr. Hook tries to draw, and which I will now come to, Mr. Hook is in error. They are important.

Now, after that meeting there were present -

Mr. Starnes. Which meeting?

Mr. Hart. This luncheon. I am still on the luncheon.

Mr. Starnes. All right.

Mr. Hart. There were present at that luncheon Mr. Fritz Kuhn and Mr. Wheeler-Hill and others of their friends. After we had sat down at the table Mr. John E. Trevor, a lawyer and an intimate friend of mine, who was at the speakers' table came to me and said 'do you know that Fritz Kuhn is present?' I did not, and I do not think I had ever heard of Fritz Kuhn up to that time. I strolled down the aisle and found that it was true, that the man with his back to the wall was Fritz Kuhn and immediately the press learned of the thing and they swarmed about the committee, where Mr. Dies and I were sitting and I was pursued and asked to say if Kuhn had been invited, and we told them, which was the case, that he had not been invited. This was a public luncheon, however, and among those who had bought tables unknown to us were James Wheeler-Hill, and his name did appear on the back of the luncheon program as one of the guests. No other name

than Wheeler-Hill appeared. The buys of tables simply registered that way. I think the press were satisfied entirely, unless it was perhaps the Daily Worker representative, for it was as much a surprise to us as anybody that Mr. Kuhn was there.

When I returned to Mr. Dies I mentioned the fact that there were persons present we had learned who would not agree with what was to be said, very likely, but we welcomed them because they would learn something.

Mr. Mason. Is there a record of your remarks, etc?

Mr. Stripling. Yes. We have that in the New York Herald-Tribune report.

Mr. Mason. That is just a newspaper report.

Mr. Hart. We did not have a stenographic report. We had not expected this particular thing to be of any importance.

So much for that. Mr. Dies, incidentally, addressed himself directly to Mr. Kuhn and talked to him so that no notice of it was taken by any one. The audience was quite satisfied that Kuhn and his friends had not been invited. Let me say that Wheeler-Hill is not a member of the organization. He was simply one of the public and read about the thing in the paper and bought a ticket.

Mr. Voorhis. Of that organization?

Mr. Hart. Of the New York State Economic Council.

Mr. Voorhis. That was the organization that sponsored this luncheon?

Mr. Hart. That was the organization that sponsored this luncheon. The second event was a so-called patriotic mass meeting which had nothing to do with the New York State

Economic Council, at the Seventh Regiment Armory, February 19th.

Mr. Dempsey. Is this the League that Mr. Vanderlip was president of at one time, Mr. Frank A. Vanderlip?

Mr. Hart. No, sir. Mr. George Wickersham was the first chairman of the board, and Mr. Britt was the next, and since he retired we have not had a chairman of the board.

Mr. Casey. How long has this organization been in existence?

Mr. Hart. Just ten years.

Mr. Starnes. All right. Thank you.

Mr. Hart. Passing over this, the statement is made here, and I will mention this too, that Mr. Hook says on page 650 that at a meeting on December 16th, I think it was, I presided, a meeting of the so called American Patriots. It is untrue that I presided. I had attended one or two luncheons of this organization to see what it was like and on this occasion I had been asked to make an address and I did make that address and withdrew. But I did not preside and that is all I know about that.

Mr. Voorhis. Was Mr. Allen Zoll there?

Mr. Hart. He was there and that is his organization.

Mr. Voorhis. Are you acquainted with him?

Mr. Hart. I am acquainted with him.

Mr. Voorhis. Will you tell us what you think about this organization.

Mr. Hart. I do not think much of it. I do not like it at all, as I will explain. One of my friends in New York had visited Spain about July or August last year,

and another trip about August or September of 1936. This friend of mine, who is Wilfred Melore, who was treasurer of the Seventh Regiment Armory event, I met her after I came back from Spain and she began giving a series of evening meetings at her studio on West 57th Street and inviting friends in who were interested in nationalist Spain. We were greatly surprised with the fact that there was an immense amount of propaganda here in the United States on account of the so-called Loyalist side. Incidentally, I wrote a book on the subject, which was published last year; and after a number of these meetings had been held, at which some people would talk, it was suggested that an organization be formed that would try to do something to offset the Red propaganda of the Anti-Franco side, and so one evening such an organization was formed. Mrs. Melore asked me to preside at the meeting, which I was glad to do, and out of that ^{called} grew an organization/American Union for Nationalist Spain. I was chairman and Mrs. Melore was treasurer, and John Eoghan Kelly was secretary. He was one of those who came around to that meeting. He had been in Spain and could speak Spanish.

Mr. Voorhis. What was the name of that organization?

Mr. Hart. The American Union for Nationalist Spain.

Mr. Voorhis. Why did you mention Mr. Kelly?

Mr. Hart. I mentioned Kelly because he is one of the persons I have heard are connected with the Christian Front. The executive committee consisted of the six persons.

There was Mr. Ogden H. Hammond, Mr. Ellery Sedgwick, formerly editor for the Atlantic Monthly.

Mr. Casey. Do they call him "Duke?"

Mr. Hart. I do not know. He was the editor for thirty years or more of the Atlantic Monthly, and he and Cameron Forbes had paid a visit to Spain the previous year. Mrs. Meiere, and Ignatius M. Wilkinson, and Kelly and myself. We talked a good deal at some of these evening meetings of the desirability of having a mass meeting to get up the interest on the Franco side, because every other organization was against them so far as we could see.

So, finally, someone came along with a ^{film} ~~picture~~ which he called "Spain in Arms," and Mrs. Meiere and I tried to work up a meeting on it. So we had a committee appointed, we wrote letters to a great many people, and said "we want to do thus and so." We said "will you appoint a committee to do it?" It was done, and the officers were myself as chairman, Mrs. Meiere as treasurer and John Kelly as secretary. The arrangement between us was that I was to secure a place to hold the meeting and we got the Seventh Regiment Armory. Mrs. Meiere was to act as treasurer and to look after one or two other things, and I had agreed to proceed to get the speakers, and Kelly was to work up the audience. Some ten days or two weeks before the meeting came off Kelly came to my office and told me very calmly that, although he had taken the job of getting the audience, he had decided to fill some speaking engagements in Boston that day and he could not go on with it, and he had hired someone to take his place, and I said "well, the deuce you

have" and I said "who have you hired?" And he said "I have hired Allen Zoll."

Mr. Casey. Who was it that had hired Allen Zoll?

Mr. Hart. Kelly had hired Allen Zoll. Mrs. Meiere and I, who had the brunt of the thing, resented that very much, but he had hired him on some arrangement for pay, and after we had thought it over Mrs. Meiere and I decided that the best thing to do was to let it go. We did not like Zoll, that is personally, but we did not like a number of things, the way he ran his meetings etc., and so on, so that they went ahead and one letter went out on the letterhead of the committee, and here is the letterhead of the committee, and someone sent us a copy of it and at the bottom of it it said "Allen Zoll, for the committee." That letter is the only one sent out from the committee with his name on it. I directed him to stop getting the audience and to keep out of sight. We felt distinctly that it would hurt the meeting if his name should appear. I do not know how we thought it but we did. However, unbeknown to us he got up this circular of the meeting, and this is the one statement in the Congressional Record, the speech of Mr. Hook, where it would appear that there might be some connection with the Christian Front, because among the four addresses where tickets could be obtained appears "The Christian Front, Manhattan."

Mr. Voorhis. When was this meeting held?

Mr. Hart. February 15th.

Mr. Voorhis. That is the one where he showed the picture?

Mr. Hart. That is the one.

Mr. Voorhis. And that was on February 19, 1939?

Mr. Hart. Yes, sir.

Mr. Voorhis. At the Seventh Regiment Armory?

Mr. Hart. Yes, sir.

Mr. Starnes. Mr. Dies was not present at that meeting?

Mr. Hart. No, and he did not know that it was being held, so far as I know.

Mr. Starnes. All right.

Mr. Hart. We did not know of the Christian Front, I neither/nor Mrs. Melere nor our legal counsel, who is a member of the legal firm of Cravath, Henderson & DeGersdorf, had ever heard of the Christian Front. The thing we resented was that someone had edged his way in to the running of the meeting and from then on we had a job in handling this man Zoll.

Mr. Starnes. This was the first time - February 19, 1939 was the first time you had heard of the Christian Front?

Mr. Hart. That is the first time that I or Colonel Cosby, who ran the meeting, had ever heard of the Christian Front.

Mr. Starnes. I see.

Mr. Hart. When the time for the meeting came, he came to me in the Armory, about three quarters of an hour before the meeting was scheduled to begin and said "do you know there are Coughlinites on Lexington Avenue handing out bills?" I was standing in the presence of Colonel

Tobin of the Seventh Regiment and one or two more, and Boll came up and stood there and I was astounded at him, and the Inspector of Police was present and in the presence of these people I instructed him to stop at once the giving out of any literature by any organization inside or outside of the hall, and it is my understanding that that was carried out.

Mr. Starnes. In other words, whatever literature might have been handed out by Coughlinites or any other group at this mass meeting, you instructed the Police Commissioner to stop?

Mr. Hart. It was against our will and we instructed the police representative - I think he was an Inspector - to stop it.

Mr. Casey. Was there any literature except the Coughlinites?

Mr. Hart. I do not think so. When the meeting was almost over Dr. Alexander Hamilton Rice, who is a professor in Harvard, and Dr. Thorning of St. Mary's College, Maryland, - nearly when the meeting was over there was a little disturbance in the rear and in came a string of people up the left aisle and they were carrying a banner, maybe forty or fifty of them. The hall was almost filled and they had to look for seats. Someone said that the picture was of Father Coughlin. Almost before they got to their seats someone grabbed the picture and threw it under the seats. Dr. Rice was speaking at the time and he paused for perhaps ten or fifteen seconds. That passed out of the picture and we forgot it and went on with the meeting. I forgot

to say that we had gone up upon the platform and Mr. Zoll came to me, trying to get one foot in the door, and he said "when the meeting is over, I have certain announcements I am going to make." I said "you are not going to make any announcements. You will not be on the platform. Colonel Tobin, who was present, and who was in charge of the Armory - and let me say it was a privately owned Armory - he butted in and said "that is right, sir. I loaned this hall to Mr. Hart, who is a friend of mine, but not for the use of any other organization or individual." And the matter was dropped. And that was the last we heard of Mr. Zoll.

When the meeting was nearly over you can see this in the New York Times of February 20th, the next day, that someone jumped up on the floor and began calling out that I had a telegram from General Franco, and he demanded that it be read. Half a dozen others, according to the Times, joined with him, and that is about a truthful description. The Times writer is very careful to say that those persons claimed that they belonged to an organization said to be called, or words to that effect, "The Christian Front." Apparently he had never heard of the Christian Front before or at least knew very little of it. The police put them out and I take it that they may have been Christian Fronters. As they were led past our table one of them rushed up and shook his fist in my face and called me a vile name, and that is about as close a connection as I have with the Christian Front.

Mr. Casey. Like the Communists?

Mr. Hart. It is a lunatic fringe, apparently.

Mr. Voorhis. He was in the same position as when the Communists attempted to do that same thing?

Mr. Hart. Yes.

Mr. Casey. What gave them the idea there was a telegram?

Mr. Hart. They had got the idea somewhere. I do not know whether it was a pretext to start something or not. I do not know, but at any rate that passed off.

There were various meetings here, for instance various false statements here. Mr. Hook says that at this meeting no subject matter taken up there could reasonably be called pro-American. Mr. John B. Trevor offered this resolution at that meeting, which was unanimously carried:

WHEREAS, this assembly of 10,000 American citizens have dedicated themselves to uphold all American institutions and the form of government established by the founders of the Republic one hundred and fifty years ago; and

WHEREAS, This assembly holds Communism to be a menace to American institutions and the maintenance of friendly relations with foreign states; be it

RESOLVED, That the Congress of the United States enforce upon all Executive Officers of this nation an attitude of absolute neutrality in foreign controversies, forbid an accord of special privileges in secrecy to any foreign power, and emphatically condemn indulgence in abusive and contemptuous comment upon rulers of foreign states, upon the forms of government they administer, or

upon the domestic policies and morals of friendly peoples, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Congress of the United States take immediate and effective steps to prevent the involvement of the United States in war for any purpose other than the defense of the vital interests of our nation and the rights and safety of our people.

Mr. Starnes. That was offered and adopted?

Mr. Hart. That was the one resolution offered and unanimously adopted.

Mr. Voorhis. Was there any reason why he limited that to Communism instead of including Fascism and Nazism?

Mr. Hart. That would go into quite a discussion. I think that the drafter of that resolution probably felt that the menace of Communism was greater than the menace of Fascism.

Mr. Voorhis. There would not have been any harm in including the others?

Mr. Hart. At least that is what the resolution said.

Mr. Oasey. These people who demanded the telegram they were probably in accord with your views of what was the happening in Spain, or do you know anything about that?

Mr. Hart. I do not know at all. I do not know who they were. I had never seen them before and I did not get the names of any of them.

Mr. Oasey. I merely point that out to show the deadly parallel that sometimes Communists are in accord with the views of other people.

Mr. Hart. I have a Jewish friend in New York who is

quite prominent and who is against Communism and against Nazism and against Fascism, and referring to one of the reputable members of his own race, it is not necessary to mention his name but it is well known, he says to me "that man is just as much a problem to his Jews as Father Coughlin is to the Christians." There is a wide fringe apparently of fanatics in all of these groups and certainly these boys were of that kind.

Mr. Voorhis. Were they all young, most of them?

Mr. Hart. They were youngish I should say; probably thirty or some younger than that.

Mr. Thomas. If you drew a resolution like that today would you include Nazism and Fascism along with Communism?

Mr. Hart. The fact is that we did include Nazism and Fascism in resolutions adopted at the Madison Square Garden.

Mr. Voorhis. The fact is that this resolution was not drawn by you but by someone else?

Mr. Hart. I do not recall. I think Mr. Trevor did it, but he probably did it in collaboration with me. I do not recall at this time. I would be perfectly willing to take the responsibility for it, but it was not by any means to indicate that we were sympathetic with Nazism or Fascism. In fact, in my opening remarks, I stated that I thought the American people were just as disgusted with the Nazis in this country as with the Communists. That is all set forth in the newspaper account, and I did not think the people here would long

stand people in foreign uniforms prancing up and down the country.

Mr. Voorhis. The only reason I asked you that question was that we have frequently asked it and said nothing about Communism.

Mr. Hart. There are other misstatements here, recent statements with regard to this meeting. "Hart turned over part of the work to his associates, Bernard T. D'Aroy and Allen Toll." I will tell you what happened. I do not think I have ever met Mr. D'Aroy. I have heard his name recently. Who he is I do not think I know. I meet a great many people, as you gentlemen do, and I do not charge myself readily with their names.

Mr. Thomas. As I recall it, this was a statement made by Mr. Hook on the floor of the House the other day?

Mr. Hart. Yes, sir.

Mr. Thomas. That is under date of January 22, and this is all the first part of his statement relative to the Christian Front?

Mr. Hart. Yes, sir.

Mr. Thomas. Of course, we have had testimony from another witness in the last day or two that a major portion of the statement was prepared for Mr. Hook by this other witness. What was his name?

Mr. Mason. Gardner Jackson.

Mr. Hart. It is quite likely, I should say. Dorothy Thompson attacked this thing, and in her column of February 22nd I think, she spoke of this meeting as though it had been of the general nature of the Bund at Madison Square

Garden. I communicated with Mrs. Ogden Reid, whom I happen to know, the vice-president of the Herald-Tribune, and -

Mr. Starnes. Just a minute. I do not know how about the other members of the committee, but I am interested in a statement from Mr. Hart concerning the charge made by Mr. Hook on this subject here in his speech on the floor of the House. I am not interested in any newspaper excerpts, and I am not interested in what somebody else thinks about you. I am trying to find out, if I can, what connection you have with the Christian Front, as charged in Mr. Hook's speech, and I wish you would confine yourself to that part of it.

Mr. Hart. Yes. Passing over that, I would like to say that Mrs. Thompson took back a part of what she said in a footnote of February 27, and then she wrote me this letter, and I will read just a few lines because it goes to the heart of what you are talking about now:

"Mrs. Reid has turned over your letters to me to answer. I am really very sorry that you do not think I made the amende honorable in the footnote to my column of February 27. I thought I made it perfectly clear that your meeting was not a Coughlin meeting and that my references to German speakers applied to the Bund meeting."

Later on:

"Since your meeting was not in collaboration with the Coughlinites, but only was patronized and advertised and invaded by them - a fact which I do not question - you, and your sponsors, were cleared of my charge by my footnote."

Mr. Starnes. All right. Now, mark those so that the reporter can identify them and put them into the record.

Mr. Hart. I will leave the whole letter, because there are paragraphs that have been selected and read.

Mr. Casey. The strength of that is that we have convinced Dorothy Thompson. If he can do that, that is something to be proud of.

Mr. Hart. I have never met her.

Mr. Starnes. Let us get down to what connection Mr. Dies has to this.

Mr. Hart. Mr. Dies has no connection with this.

Mr. Starnes. With any of these things testified to as having happened at the mass meeting in the Armory of the Seventh Regiment, Mr. Dies had nothing to do?

Mr. Hart. Not at all.

Mr. Starnes. Nor any other member of the committee at that time.

Mr. Hart. Not at all. Mr. Hook says Mr. Dies had consorted with certain people who had something to do with this matter.

Mr. Starnes. All right. As to the last matter, in the first place, Mr. Hook says on page 550, "we find Dies turning to his friend Merwin K. Hart to promote a mass meeting for America at Madison Square Garden, on Wednesday, November 29, 1939."

The fact of the matter is, I made a special trip to Washington, as I did the previous year, to see if I could prevail upon Mr. Dies to come up there and attend a

dinner or a luncheon in late November, and we talked about it for some time and then finally he said "well, see here, the Bunders and the Communists have had meetings in Madison Square Garden; would it be possible for us to have an American meeting in Madison Square Garden?" I said "I do not know, I will see," and I went back and found great interest in it and that led to the meeting. The meeting speaks for itself. Here are a hundred odd sponsors. They include Jews and gentiles and patriotic organizations, men and women, former governors and other officials - Colonel Theodore Roosevelt and General O'Ryan and others. The speakers were Colonel George U. Harvey, president of the Borough of Queens; Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, A. F. of L; Jeremiah Cross, past state commander of the American Legion; Laurens Hamilton, former New York State assemblyman, president of the New York State Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution; Jean Mathias, New York State Commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States; and Mr. Dies. One member of the Metropolitan Opera gave a musical recital. The committee, with myself as chairman, consisted of Jeremiah Cross, Hildreth Meiere and Colonel Arthur F. Gosby, vice-chairman; Mary Vail Andress, Treasurer; Colonel Ralph O. Tobin, Secretary, and the others were Knowlton Durham, John B. Trevor, Jr., George A. Timone, Frank Fox, W. E. McKell, Milton W. Harrison, John D. Dunlop, Philip Liebmann, Robert Appleton, Mesdmore Kendall, and Lawrence B. Elliman. There were two other members that were added at the last moment. I do not remember

their names at this time.

Mr. Thomas. You might put in there that on the back of that pamphlet is quoted the anthem "America".

Mr. Hart. Yes. Those are, in substance, the facts, gentlemen.

Mr. Starnes. All right. Now, I have some questions I want to ask you.

Mr. Hart. Yes, sir.

Mr. Starnes. Prior to February, 1939, and I believe you have stated under oath that you had never heard of the Christian Front.

Mr. Hart. I never heard of it.

Mr. Starnes. Do you recall ever having heard of the German-American Bund prior to that time?

Mr. Hart. Oh, yes. I had heard of that.

Mr. Starnes. Did you know Mr. Kuhn or Mr. Hill or any other member of the Bund?

Mr. Hart. I had never heard of them.

Mr. Starnes. Had you ever been to one of their meetings?

Mr. Hart. About two years ago I went to one of their mass meetings and sat up in the peanut gallery, because I wanted to see what it was all about.

Mr. Starnes. Are you in sympathy with the Christian Front or the German-American Bund or any of these organizations?

Mr. Hart. Not in the least. I think the German-American Bund is stupid and I cannot find out, I confess, just what the Christian Front is. It is apparently an

underground organization. Let me say this -

Mr. Starnes. Let me ask you some other questions.

Mr. Hart. Pardon me.

Mr. Starnes. Has there been any connection, direct or indirect, between you as an individual and the directing heads of the Christian Front or the German-American Bund or any of these groups in promoting any meetings in New York City?

Mr. Hart. Not in the least.

Mr. Starnes. At which Mr. Dies attended.

Mr. Hart. No.

Mr. Starnes. Have you ever at any time expressed any sympathy at all with the program of the German-American Bund or the Christian Mobilizers?

Mr. Hart. No, sir, not to my knowledge.

Mr. Starnes. I believe that is all I have to ask him. Mr. Mason, have you anything?

Mr. Mason. It seems to me it is a clear cut case.

Mr. Starnes. Have you anything, Mr. Voorhis?

Mr. Voorhis. Yes, sir. Do you think that our committee should investigate as thoroughly as we can - we already have to some extent, not very much - the Christian Front and try to find out about it as much as possible?

Mr. Hart. I should certainly think so, if you think they are important enough.

Mr. Voorhis. I want to know what you think.

Mr. Hart. I do not know enough about it to say, but if you think they are subversive -

Mr. Voorhis. Do you?

Mr. Hart. I think they are nuts.

Mr. Voorhis. I suppose we would all agree with that.

Mr. Hart. My opinion is not intelligent enough to be subversive. I may be wrong. Maybe, congressman, there are people who are in the Christian Front who may be high up and they may be intelligent enough.

Mr. Voorhis. Do you know Mr. Cassidy?

Mr. Hart. I never heard of him.

Mr. Voorhis. Didn't you go to the meeting at the Manhattan Opera House and meet Mr. Cassidy?

Mr. Hart. No, sir. I have never been in the Manhattan Opera House. He brings that in here but he does not mention me in connection with it.

Mr. Thomas. Hook brings that in?

Mr. Hart. Yes, sir.

Mr. Thomas. He probably got that from Jackson.

Mr. Hart. He does speak of two or three facts.

Mr. Voorhis. You were not at the Manhattan Opera House with Mr. Cassidy?

Mr. Hart. No, sir.

Mr. Voorhis. And you never spoke at a meeting with Mr. Cassidy?

Mr. Hart. No, sir, I do not think I ever met him.

Mr. Voorhis. This was supposed to be in 1936. Do you know anything about the American Coalition?

Mr. Hart. Yes. I know a good deal about it.

Mr. Voorhis. Do you know anything about any connection Mr. James Trew has to that?

Mr. Hart. When I say, that I do not know that Mr.

Trew had ever been connected with the American Coalition, and I asked Mr. Trevor, who is an intimate friend of mine, and he said he has never had anything to do with it.

Mr. Voorhis. What is the American Coalition?

Mr. Hart. The American Coalition is an organization of a hundred or more patriotic societies, such as the American Legion, and the Sons of the American Revolution.

Mr. Thomas. I think right at this point we should introduce as an exhibit the letterhead of the American Coalition. We have that and I think we ought to send for it now and put it in and see who some of these organizations are.

Mr. Voorhis. You do not know of any association that Mr. Trew ever had with the American Coalition?

Mr. Hart. I do not know of any such, and I would be astounded if I found he was, Mr. Trevor says there is none.

Mr. Voorhis. What do you think of Mr. Trew's activities?

Mr. Hart. I think Mr. Trew has been going pretty haywire in recent years. When he began his letters, I was sympathetic, but when he got into anti-semitic stuff I was not so sympathetic. I told him on one or two occasions that I thought he was going too far.

Mr. Mason. That has nothing to do with what we are inquiring about.

Mr. Starnes. No, it has nothing to do with that and he is asking for opinion evidence.

Mr. Hart. I am not a member of the constituent organizations, or any one of them. I suppose Mr. Trevor

asked me down and he wanted me to give a talk on Spain in his meeting. I spoke in the morning and Mr. Dies spoke at the luncheon. We were not speakers at the same time.

Mr. Voorhis. I do not know anything about it.

Mr. Thomas. It all came up before the Dies Committee.

Mr. Voorhis. I was not a member.

Mr. Thomas. Mr. Steele said it was a coalition of the patriotic societies and they are all listed here on page 276 of volume I of the Dies Committee hearings. I notice that the Veterans of Foreign Wars is one of them.

Mr. Voorhis. I will say to the committee that what I am trying to do is to get the record straight on all of these matters.

Mr. Starnes. That is all right. If there are any further questions, go right ahead.

Mr. Casey. I notice that you had as a speaker, according to the program at your last meeting, a man who is affiliated with the A. F. of L?

Mr. Hart. Yes.

Mr. Casey. Who was he?

Mr. Hart. Joseph P. Ryan. He has just been indicted.

Mr. Casey. How did you happen to have him speak?

Mr. Hart. He wanted to get representatives of the different big groups in the community.

Mr. Casey. Did you make any efforts to get any representative of the CIO, the other labor organization?

Mr. Hart. No, we did not.

Mr. Casey. Why didn't you?

Mr. Hart. We got one representative of labor and with our big program we thought that was enough.

Mr. Casey. But you knew that labor was divided into two major groups?

Mr. Hart. Yes.

Mr. Casey. And you got the rival of the OIO?

Mr. Hart. We do not take any position against the OIO, and did not in this meeting at all. I do not recall that any word was said about it. It may have been, but I do not recall it.

Mr. Casey. I have nothing further.

Mr. Starnes. Any questions, Mr. Thomas?

Mr. Thomas. No.

Mr. Hart. May I say just a word or two that occurred to me since I spoke? In the first place, let me point this out. On this list of sponsors here -

Mr. Thomas. What is that?

Mr. Hart. This is the luncheon of December 8th where Mr. Dies was with Kelly and Zoll, that these same two men were among this list of sponsors. We made a list of two or three hundred people and their names were on the letters. Why they put them on I do not know. We knew nothing against them then, and that was three months before we heard of the Christian Front and it may be that they did not belong to that organization at that time. At any rate, they are there.

Mr. Starnes. And you had never heard of the Christian

Front at that time?

Mr. Hart. No, sir.

Mr. Thomas. They were two out of how many sponsors?

Mr. Hart. Roughly, fifty. In the second place, Mr. Hook says here that admission was charged at this mass meeting on November 25th at Madison Square Garden, but he says that there was one group which did not have to pay to hear the great congressman from Texas, and that group was the Christian Front. As a matter of fact, we gave away more than twenty-five thousand free tickets. We gave them to all who came, gave them to Communists. The Christian Front were not by any means the people we sought to pay for. We wanted to fill the hall with American citizens, without regard to their belief, and we ^{did not} singled out the people and were not after those whom we thought were more in sympathy with our ideas.

Mr. Starnes. Have you stated your position?

Mr. Hart. Yes, sir. Let me just say this, to be perfectly safe. I have said that I did not know any persons that are Christian Fronters. This is an underground organization. Since I never heard of it prior to February, 1939, it may easily be that persons representing the Christian Front, or belonging to it - they could not have been of much importance, if there were any, - have spoken to me and dropped into the office to see me and I have seen them without, however, me knowing their connection with the Christian Front.

Mr. Starnes. That is all, then.

(Whereupon, at 12:50 p.m. the committee adjourned.)